

Celebrating 40 Years of Respiratory Therapy Licensure in California

Honoring the Pioneers:

In 1985, a new era of healthcare professionalism began in California with the implementation of mandatory licensure for respiratory care practitioners (RCPs). Now, 40 years later, we celebrate not only the progress of the profession but also the dedication of those who have held their licenses continuously since the very beginning.

These founding licensees—some of whom still practice, mentor, or advocate for the profession—were among the first to raise the bar for respiratory care in California. They helped legitimize the field as a vital component of patient care and set a precedent for clinical excellence, ethical standards, and lifelong learning.

The establishment of the Respiratory Care Board (RCB), originally the Respiratory Care Examining Committee, was a watershed moment for the profession. It ushered in new expectations of accountability, education, and credentialing. The four-decade commitment of those who were licensed during that inaugural “grandfather period” and remain in good standing today reflects an extraordinary level of service and integrity.

These professionals have witnessed—and contributed to—dramatic changes in the field, including the evolution of mechanical ventilation, the emergence of high-flow oxygen therapy, the response to pandemics like H1N1 and COVID-19, and the elevation of education and practice standards.

Recognizing Their Legacy:

To those individuals who have been licensed RCPs in California since the beginning, we offer our deepest appreciation. Your careers have touched countless lives, shaped clinical practice, and inspired generations of respiratory therapists.

In honoring you, we celebrate more than years of service—we celebrate professionalism, resilience, and a steadfast commitment to patient care. You are the pillars upon which California’s respiratory therapy community has been built.

Looking Ahead:

As we reflect on these 40 years, we also look forward to a future where respiratory therapy continues to advance, innovate, and advocate for patient health. The foundation laid by the original licensees gives today’s practitioners a strong and proud legacy to carry forward.

Happy 40th licensure anniversary to all California RCPs—and heartfelt congratulations to the trailblazers who’ve been with us from the start!

Of the licenses issued in 1985, 705 remain active as of 2025. They belong to the licensees on the following pages.



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NEXT BOARD MEETING

Friday, June 6, 2025, in Sacramento.

Visit the RCB website for meeting details, including how to earn continuing education units for attending!

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